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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEYDIRECTIONS FOR POISONING JACK RABBITS IN COLORADO

How to poison jack rabbits is a problem that must be worked out locally in practically every instance, for when it comes to getting its food supply the jack rabbit has an instinct that guides it unerringly to the choicest food. The person who is poisoning these rodents must put out baits that are as attractive to the jack rabbits as the food it would obtain in its natural runs, and at the same time must be sure that the poison is out of reach of all livestock. Strychnine plays no favorites and will poison all domestic stock as readily as it will rabbits. Never guess about the safeness of the poison; always be sure that there is no possibility of any livestock getting to poison baits.

Methods of Poisoning

The poison-pen or corral method will probably be the most suitable for use in this State and give the best results. The corral is constructed by placing four substantial posts 2 feet in the ground and at least a rod apart, so as to make a pen about 16 feet square. Barbed wire or hog wire should be placed around these posts and securely fastened so that no stock can possibly get into the inclosure. If hog wire is used, it should be placed so that there will be at least 8 inches between the ground and the lower strands of the netting, with two strands of barbed wire above the netting. If barbed wire is used, put on at least five strands, 10 inches apart. The posts should be securely braced so that there will not be slack enough in the wire to permit any stock getting eventually into the pen. These corrals should be constructed at points where the rabbits are congregating or in open fields where they are doing considerable damage. If in the brush and pinyon country, some of these pens may be constructed in draws or arroyos where the rabbits seem to be traveling back and forth.

In placing the bait in the pens, it is advisable to drive a number of stakes into the ground, or else construct a feeding pen inside the corral, so that the wind will not blow the poisoned baits out where stock can get hold of them. Stakes driven into the ground 6 inches apart will allow rabbits to feed on the bait and at the same time will keep it confined to the center of the pen.

The following method may be used with good results, but only where there is no possibility of any livestock getting to the poisoned baits: Place handfuls of poisoned baits along the trails where the jack rabbits are going to and from their natural feeding ground. Good results have been obtained by sticking poisoned grain heads, as milo maize, kafir corn, or wheat or oat heads, in the snow so that the rabbits can see them readily.

Baits and Their Preparation

The most suitable bait to use in any locality is the crop or grain on which the rabbits are in the habit of feeding. If this is alfalfa, the field should be baited with alfalfa. If kafir corn, wheat, or oats are being eaten, then these should accordingly be used as baits. In winter all baits used will naturally be dry, and it will therefore take more preparation to get them ready.

Dry-alfalfa baits:

In preparing dry-alfalfa baits by either of the following formulas better results will be obtained if the mixture is allowed to dry before using:

10 pounds chopped alfalfa or alfalfa leaves.

1 ounce strychnine sulphate.

1 gallon hot water.

Dissolve strychnine in hot water and pour over alfalfa, stirring until all moisture is absorbed.

10 pounds chopped alfalfa or alfalfa leaves.

1 ounce strychnine alkaloid.

1/2 gallon hot water.

1 quart corn sirup.

1 tablespoonful salt.

Mix water and sirup; stir in strychnine and salt. Keep mixture well stirred and pour over alfalfa. Stir alfalfa until all moisture is absorbed.

Green-alfalfa bait (for summer poisoning):

Gather 20 pounds of green alfalfa tips and sprinkle 1 ounce of powdered strychnine alkaloid over them. Mix alfalfa thoroughly until poison is evenly spread.

Poisoned grain-head bait:

3 quarts water.

1 quart corn sirup.

1 tablespoonful salt.

16 pounds of any one of the following: Milo maize heads, kafir-corn heads, wheat heads, oat heads, barley heads.

1 ounce strychnine alkaloid.

Mix water, sirup, and salt together. Dip grain heads into the solution, let partially dry, and then sprinkle on strychnine.

Poisoned-salt bait:

1 ounce strychnine.

1 pound common salt.

Mix thoroughly and place as follows: Take a 2-by-4, 18 inches long, and bore 1-inch holes close to the ends, 1-1/2 inches deep. Fill the holes half full of the poisoned-salt mixture. Place these planks along the trail where the rabbits are traveling. If the holes are completely filled, there

is a possibility that stock may find these salt licks and get poisoned, whereas if they are only half filled jack rabbits can get the poisoned salt readily, but stock can not. It is well to put a long spike or a bolt through the middle of the plank and stick it into the ground so that stock can not tip it over.

In placing baits either in the poison corral or in the open field, put out clean unpoisoned baits for the first two or three nights, to get the rabbits accustomed to finding feed in these places. After the rabbits have cleaned up the unpoisoned baits two or three times at the same point, place the poisoned baits there, prepared according to the foregoing formulas. When the rabbits have quit feeding at a place, destroy all poisoned baits.

CAUTION

Be sure to use all necessary precautions in protecting stock.

All utensils used in the preparation of poison and all poison containers should be kept PLAINLY LABELED, AND OUT OF REACH of children, livestock, and irresponsible persons.

Antidotes

Human beings.--In cases of accidental poisoning with strychnine use an emetic of mustard, followed by large draughts of warm water, and give powdered charcoal. Keep the patient in a quiet place, avoiding noise, quick movements, or anything that may startle or disturb. To relieve spasms let patient inhale pure chloroform, or give chloral hydrate (25 grains). A physician should be called with utmost promptness.

Horses or other livestock.--Throw 1 pound of green tea into 1 quart of boiling water; stir well and add 2 quarts of cold water. The tea will practically absorb all the hot water, but a tannic-acid solution will be derived by the addition of the cold water. This solution will contain about 1.6 ounces of tannic acid, a quantity sufficient to act as an antidote for a horse or other animal of similar size that may have been accidentally poisoned by eating strychnine.

